

SETTING FORTH THE DEFINITION OF SUBSTANTIAL CAUSE

[This is divided into:]

- (1) The definition of substantial cause
- (2) The body does not [satisfy] that [definition] as regards to the mind

THE DEFINITION OF SUBSTANTIAL CAUSE

To counteract the misperception that the body is the substantial and thus the indispensable cause of the mental consciousness, Dharmakirti presents the definition of substantial cause:

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Without a transformation of the substantial cause
The substantial result would be unable to change.
[This is] like, [for] example, without the transformation
Of the clay [there would be no transformation of a clay] vase, and so forth. [62]*

Regarding the subject, the flame of a lamp, it is **the substantial cause** of the rays of the flame of the lamp, (a) because **without the transformation of** [the flame's] nature, **the substantial result**, the nature of the rays of [the flame] **would be unable to change** [and] (b) because [the flame] is the unique and direct placing agent of the mark, the mere nature [of the rays]. This is **like**, for **example, without a transformation of the clay**, there would be no transformation of a clay **vase, and so forth**.

The definition of substantial cause is: that which mainly generates its substantial result, a continuum of a similar type.

This means that the flame of a lamp (or a butter-lamp¹) is the substantial cause of the rays of the flame since the flame transforms into or becomes the rays, with the rays being the flame's continuum of a similar type. The rays are the flame's continuum of a similar type because they are the subsequent continuum as well as the result of the flame.

If the nature or entity of the flame did not change, the rays would not be transformed either. This is similar to the example of clay and a clay vase: unless the nature of the clay is transformed, the clay vase cannot change or be transformed. In other words, without the clay changing moment by moment and eventually transforming into a clay vase, there would be no clay vase that also underwent momentary changes and transformed into its substantial result.

Therefore, a substantial cause is *the direct and unique placing agent of the mark* (Tib: *thun mong ma yin pa'i lag rjes dngos su 'jog byed*), the entity of the substantial result.

Please note that in the context of a cause and its effect, 'a placing agent' (Tib: *'jog byed*) refers to a cause, i.e., that which "places", generates, creates or produces a result. The Tibetan term *lag rjes*, translated as "mark", literally means 'hand mark' or 'hand impression' and when used together with the term "placing agent" it means 'result'. So, a cause is described as 'a placing agent of a mark' (Tib: *lag rjes 'jog byed*), because it is that which generates its result.

¹ Please note that although Gyaltsab Je cites a similar example of a substantial cause and its substantial result – a flame and its rays – here he does not use the Tibetan term "*mar me*" ("butter fire" or "flame of a butter-lamp") but the term "*sgron me*" which is often translated as "lamp" or "light". However, in Tibetan the two terms are synonymous, with "*mar me*" or "*sgron me*" not always literally referring to a butter-lamp. In Tibetan, even the flame of a paraffin lamp is called "butter-lamp". Yet both "*mar me*" and "*sgron me*" refer to an open flame which is why I chose to translate "*sgron me*" as "flame of a lamp".

Here, Gyaltsab Je describes a substantial cause, not just as ‘a placing agent of a mark’ but as a ‘*direct* and *unique* placing agent of a mark’. This is because a substantial cause such as the flame of a lamp is the *direct* cause of — and thus directly generates — its substantial result, the rays, without first giving rise to something other than the rays. Also, the flame is the *unique* cause of the rays, for of the two, the characteristics and the nature or entity of the rays, the flame mainly creates the nature of the rays.

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. What is the definition of substantial cause?
2. Why would it be absurd if a substantial cause, such as the flame of a lamp, did not change in order to generate its substantial result, the rays of the flame?
3. What is the meaning of this phrase: ‘a substantial cause is the direct and unique placing agent of the mark, the nature of the substantial result’.

THE BODY DOES NOT [SATISFY] THAT [DEFINITION] AS REGARDS TO THE MIND

This outline presents the reason why the body does not satisfy the definition of a substantial cause as regards the mental consciousness, and thus does not serve as the substantial cause of the mental awareness:

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Without the transformation of some functioning entity
[of the cause]*

*It is not reasonable that [the cause which] transforms some functioning entity
[Of the result] is the substantial cause of that [result]
It is like an ox and a wild ox.*

The mind and the body are also like that. [63]

It follows that **the mind and the body are also** not [related as] substantial cause and substantial result, because **an ox and a wild ox are like that** in that the transformation [of one] does not ensue from the transformation [of the other].

Our own system cites a consequence, the meaning of which is that the body does not satisfy the definition of a substantial cause with regard to the mind, because changes to the mind do not depend on changes to the body.

This is similar to, for instance, a domesticated ox and a wild ox² in the sense that the transformation of a wild ox does not depend on the transformation of a domesticated ox.

[The reason] is pervaded [by the predicate], because **without the transformation of some functioning entity** of the cause, **it is not reasonable** that the cause – **which transforms some functioning entity** of the result – be that [result’s] substantial cause. For example, like an ox and a wild ox.

² In Tibetan, the term *ba lang* = ox, refers to a domesticated bovine. With regard to a ‘wild ox’, Gyaltsab Je’s *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation* and Khedrup Je’s *Ocean of Reasoning* differ in their spelling. The spelling in Gyaltsab Je’s commentary is *ba min* which literally means ‘non-ox’ (or ‘non-cow’), while Khedrup writes *ba men* which translates to “wild ox” (although sometimes Khedrup also writes *ba min*). According to Geshe Palden Drakpa, here the term refers to a ‘wild ox’, which is why I chose that translation.

The reason of the consequence (*because the transformation of one does not follow from the transformation of the other*) is pervaded by the predicate (*the mind and the body are not related as substantial cause and substantial result*), which means that, *if the transformation of the mind does not ensue from the transformation of the body, it necessarily follows that the mind and the body do not relate as substantial cause and substantial result*.

This is because a substantial cause cannot possibly transform into its substantial result without undergoing a transformation.

Hence, if the body were hypothetically the substantial cause of the mental consciousness, the mental consciousness could not be transformed without a transformation of the body. Yet this is not the case, for a transformation of the mental consciousness does not require a transformation of the body, just as changes to a wild ox do not necessitate changes to a domesticated ox.

Someone says: Well, then, it is contradictory that [body and mind] abide together.

An opponent holds that if our own system compares the body and mind to a domesticated and a wild ox, it then follows that the body and mind do not exist together just as a domesticated ox and a wild ox live in different environments. However, that would contradict our own system's explanation that, as regards one lifetime, the body and the mind are propelled by the same projecting karma and exist together as the aggregates of the same living being:

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

By the [substantial] causes of those [two] acting as [each other's] cooperative conditions

They are generated [as] the resultant [body and mind that] abide together.

Like fire and molten copper. [64]

[Response:] It is suitable for **the resultant** body and mind to **abide together**, because they are generated **by the substantial causes of those two acting as** each other's **cooperative conditions**. For example, **like fire and molten copper** abiding together.

Our own system replies that although *in general*, a living being's mental consciousness is the cause of that living being's body (and therefore precedes that body), the mental consciousness and the body that pertain to one rebirth, as the aggregates of the same living being, relate to each other in the following way: former moments of the body serve as the substantial cause of later moments of the body and as the cooperative condition of later moments of the mental consciousness, while former moments of the mental consciousness serve as the substantial cause of later moments of the mental consciousness and the cooperative condition of later moments of the body.

To be more specific, the first moment of the body is the substantial cause of the second moment of the body and the cooperative condition of the second moment of the mental consciousness; the second moment of the body is the substantial cause of the third moment of the body and the cooperative condition of the third moment of the mental consciousness, and so forth. Similarly, the first moment of the mental consciousness is the substantial cause of the second moment of the mental consciousness and the cooperative condition of the second moment of the body; the second moment of the mental consciousness is the substantial cause of the third moment of the mental consciousness and the cooperative condition of the third moment of the body, and so on.

The relationship between the mental consciousness and the body that are the aggregates of the same person is similar to that of fire and molten copper, for example, in the sense that although in general, fire is the cause of molten copper, there are

instances of fire and molten copper existing together. There are such instances because molten copper only retains its fluid consistency as long as it is hot, which means, as long as it is of one nature with the element of fire.

Please note that fire here does not refer to bright flames giving off light but to the *fire element* (defined as ‘that which is hot and burning’). Since molten copper possesses the characteristics of being hot and burning, one of its constituents is necessarily the element of fire. The fire element is a part of the molten copper; it is of one nature with it and thus exists together with the molten copper.

Furthermore, the earlier moments of the molten copper are the substantial cause of the later moments of the molten copper and the cooperative condition of the later moments of that copper’s fire element, while the earlier moments of the fire element are the substantial cause of the later moments of the fire element and the cooperative condition of the later moments of the molten copper.

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. In what sense are a domesticated ox and a wild ox similar to the body and the mental consciousness?
2. Why does an opponent argue that it is contradictory for the body and the mind to abide together?
3. In what sense are fire and molten copper similar to the body and the mental consciousness?

REFUTATION THROUGH AN ANALYSIS OF [THEIR] SIMULTANEOUS [EXISTENCE]

[This is divided into:]

- (1) Refutation [of the idea] that [the body] is the simultaneous base [of the mind]
- (2) Refuting other types [of non-Buddhist tenets] through that
- (3) A summary

REFUTATION [OF THE IDEA] THAT [THE BODY] IS THE SIMULTANEOUS BASE [OF THE MIND]

In the following outlines, our own system addresses the latter two possibilities (according to the Lokayatas) as regards to the relation between the body and the mental consciousness (see pp. 166 - 167): If the body and the mental consciousness do not relate to one another as substantial cause and result, some Lokayatas may argue that the body is the special base of the mental consciousness by way of the body being the simultaneous cause of the mental consciousness. This would mean that the body exists at the same time as that mind. Our own system refutes that assertion.

[This is divided into:]

- (1) Citing a consequence
- (2) Refutation of the reply to that
- (3) Eliminating [the idea] that it is contradicted by direct perception

CITING A CONSEQUENCE

An opponent argues that just as, for instance, the flame of a butter-lamp is the special base of the flame's rays while the flame and its rays exist simultaneously³, likewise the body serves as the special base of the mental consciousness, with the body and the mental consciousness existing at the same time.

In order to refute this misperception our own system cites a consequence:

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*[Whether substantially] existent [or substantially] non-existent, since [a simultaneous] base does not [make sense]
[The body] is not [the simultaneous base of the mental consciousness]......*

Regarding the subject, the mental awareness, it follows that the body **is not** its simultaneous base, because whether [the mental consciousness is substantially **existent** or substantially **non-existent**, a simultaneous **base** that is of a different substantial entity **does not** make sense.

Our own system cites the following consequence: *Regarding the subject, the mental awareness, it follows that the body is not its simultaneous base, because there can be no simultaneous base of a mental consciousness that is of a different nature than that mental consciousness.*

A simultaneous base of a mental consciousness that is of a different nature than the mental consciousness does not exist because if two phenomena relate to each other as one being a base of the other, they are either (a) of different natures or (b) of one nature. If they are (a) of different natures, they cannot exist simultaneously, while if they are of one nature, they exist at the same time.

If two phenomena – that relate to each other in terms of one being a base of the other – are (a) of different natures, they necessarily relate as cause and effect since that which acts as the base is necessarily the cause of the other phenomenon. An example of such a relationship is a seed and a sprout. The seed is the cause, and thus the base, of the sprout. Since the seed is the cause of the sprout, the seed and the sprout do not exist at the same time and are thus of different natures.

If two phenomena – that relate to each other in terms of one being a base of the other – are (b) of one nature, they must exist at the same time. Their relation is such that one is an attribute, a part, or an instance of the other phenomenon, with that other phenomenon serving as the base. An example would be a human body and the head of the human body. The body is the base of its part, the head, and the two are of one nature, both existing at the same time.

Hence, if as the opponent suggests, the body were the simultaneous base of the mental consciousness, the body and the mental consciousness would have to be of one nature. But since the body and the mental consciousness are of different natures, the body cannot serve as the *simultaneous* base of the mental consciousness.

³ Please note, that although the opponent is correct in the assumption that the flame is the special base of the rays of the flame, he fails to understand that the flame is the rays' special base on account of being their substantial cause. He is unaware of that, for he believes that the flame and the rays exist simultaneously since they can be perceived at the same time.

According to our own system, the flame and the rays that we perceive together are not related as cause and effect. This is because the first moments of the rays of the flame (which are the result of the first moment of the flame) exist one moment after the first moment of the flame and thus the first moments of the rays exist at the same time as the second moment of the flame. Likewise, the second moments of the rays exist simultaneously with the third moment of the flame; the third moments of the rays exist together with the fourth moment of the flame, and so forth. However, those simultaneously existing moments are not related as cause and effect.

This is why Dharmakirti argues that the body is not the simultaneous base of the mental consciousness because, whether the mental consciousness is substantially existent or not, there is no simultaneous base of the mental consciousness that is of different natures than itself.

Please note, that *substantially existent* (Tib: *rdzes su yod pa*) and impermanent are synonymous, and a phenomenon that is *substantially non-existent* (Tib: *rdzes su med pa*) and a permanent phenomenon are synonymous.

Hence, whether a phenomenon is impermanent or permanent, if something is the simultaneous base of that phenomenon, it is necessarily of one nature with the phenomenon.

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. Why does an opponent assert that the body is the simultaneous base of the mental consciousness?
2. What is the consequence our own system cites in response to that assertion?
3. Why is there no simultaneous base that is of a different nature than the phenomenon based on it?
4. What is the meaning of *substantially existent* and *substantially non-existent*?

REFUTATION OF THE REPLY TO THAT

In response to the consequence cited by our own system, an opponent – who is a follower of one of the Indian non-Buddhist philosophical systems – argues that the body is the *simultaneous base* of the mental consciousness because it is a base that causes the already existent mental consciousness to remain for some time.⁴ In the context of refuting such a base, our own system refutes an *abiding cause* and a *disintegrating cause*.⁵

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

.....Someone says: a cause of the abiding of
That which exists is [the meaning of] a base.....

Someone says: [That] is not so, because the meaning of **a base is: a cause of the abiding of that which exists** as an already established [phenomenon].

An opponent disagrees that there can be no simultaneous base of a phenomenon that is of a different nature than the phenomenon. This is because, he claims, the meaning of a base is: *a cause of the remaining or persistence of an impermanent phenomenon which has already been established*.

⁴ Such as a base is also referred to as *a base of the abiding of something that is already established* (Tib: *grub zin gnas pa'i rten*). Here in the context of the body and the mental consciousness, the opponent claims that the *body is the base of the abiding of the already established mental consciousness*.

⁵ Please note that if an *abiding cause* (Tib: *gnas rgyu*) existed, it would not *generate* or *produce* its result – it would cause it to remain. A *disintegrating cause* (Tib: *jig rgyu*) would not generate its result either: it would cause it to disintegrate or go out of existence. For instance, the *abiding cause* of a sprout would not produce the sprout (unlike its *generating cause*, for example, the seed); it would cause the sprout to remain for some time. Likewise, the sprout's *disintegrating cause* would not generate the sprout; it would cause it to disintegrate, i.e., go out of existence.

In other words, according to the opponent, a base refers to a cause that is responsible for an impermanent phenomenon (that has already come into existence but has not yet disintegrated) to remain for some time.

Based on the assumption that impermanent phenomena first come into existence, then remain for some time, and eventually disintegrate (i.e., go out of existence)⁶ the opponent holds that in order for a phenomenon (that has already come into existence) to remain, it needs a base that causes the phenomenon to remain, for otherwise it would go out of existence as soon as it was produced. The body therefore acts as a simultaneous base of the mental consciousness, because it is a base of the *already existent* mental consciousness and thus exists at the same time as the mental consciousness.⁷

However, since according to the opponent the body also serves as the cause of the mental consciousness' remaining, it is of a different nature than the mental consciousness.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

.....[the body] does not exist [as] a base [of the abiding of the mental consciousness]

Because that which makes [the mental awareness] abide is not of a different [nature] than [the mental awareness]. [65]

[Response:] Regarding the subject, the [mental awareness], the body **does not exist** as a **base of the abiding** of the already established [mental awareness], **because that which makes** [the mental consciousness] **abide is** (a) **not of a different** [nature] **than** [the mental awareness], but (b) generated as its entity by the cause of [the mental awareness].

In response, our own system cites a syllogism: *Regarding the subject, the mental consciousness, the body is not a base or cause of the persistence of the mental consciousness, because the mental consciousness' attribute of persistence is (a) of one nature with the mental consciousness and (b) generated by the same cause that generated the mental consciousness.*

'That which makes the mental consciousness abide' (Tib: *gnas pa po*) refers to the mental consciousness' attribute of persistence. According to our own system, it is a feature or characteristic of the mental consciousness that enables the consciousness to abide or remain.

⁶ This assumption is similar to the view of the Vaibashika School which asserts that an impermanent phenomenon has three characteristics: *generated* (Tib: *skyes pa*), *abiding* (Tib: *gnas pa*), and *disintegrating* (Tib: *jig pa*) with these three held to act as agents. *Generated* is responsible for the production of the impermanent phenomenon it characterizes, *abiding* is responsible for it to remain for some time, and *disintegrating* for it to go out of existence. According to the Vaibashika, although the three characteristics are established simultaneously, the times at which they perform their activities are different. This is because initially, *generating* causes an impermanent phenomenon to come into existence; thereupon, *abiding* causes it to remain, and eventually, *disintegrating* (i.e., *impermanence*) causes it to go out of existence (see Jeffrey Hopkin's *Maps of the Profound* pp. 239 – 243).

According to the other Buddhist tenet schools, the three characteristics do not act as agents but are associated with the *activities* of having been generated, remaining, and disintegrating. The three are explained to occur simultaneously, not serially, since whatever is an impermanent phenomenon is necessarily all three: it has been generated, it abides, and disintegrates. A clay vase, for instance, has been generated because it was created by its substantial cause (clay) and cooperative conditions (a potter, a potter-wheel, etc.); it abides since it exists and continues for some time as a vase; and it disintegrates (i.e., it is impermanent) because the different moments that comprise the vase change moment by moment, thereby taking it closer to the time when it ceases to exist as a vase.

⁷ From a Buddhist point of view, a cause of an *already existent* phenomenon does not exist, for a cause and its result do not exist at the same time. A cause can only give rise to a phenomenon that *will come into existence*.

The mental consciousness is the base of that feature.⁸

Since a characteristic and its base (i.e., in this case that which possesses the characteristic) are (a) necessarily of one nature, the mental consciousness' feature of persistence and the mental consciousness are of one nature.

Also, (b) as a *unique* characteristic of the mental consciousness, the mental consciousness' attribute of persistence arises from the same cause as the base of that characteristic, the mental consciousness. This is because the cause of a *unique* impermanent characteristic and the cause of the base of that characteristic are synonymous.⁹

Hence, according to our own system, it does not make sense for the body to act as a cause of the mental consciousness' quality of persistence since – as established before – the body is not a cause of the mental consciousness, and if the body is not a cause of the mental consciousness, it is necessarily not a cause of the mental consciousness' attribute of persistence. This is because the causes of those two are synonymous and whatever is the cause of one is necessarily the cause of the other.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Even if [someone says that they] are [of a] different [nature, our own system replies:]
[because it is] the very cause
In what way does the [body] act [as responsible for the abiding of the mental
consciousness'] functioning entity?*

Even if someone says that the reason is not established [as] they **are** of **different** substantial entities, [our own system replies:] **In what way does the** body act [as responsible for] the abiding of [the mental consciousness'] **functioning entity** – it follows such is not feasible. This is because [according to the opponent, the body] is **the very cause** of the abiding [of the mental consciousness which is] of a different nature [than the mental consciousness].

If an opponent argued that the reason of the syllogism cited by our own system is not established, because the mental awareness and its persistence are of different substantial entities the following absurdity would occur: the mental consciousness' attribute of persistence would have no impact on the mental consciousness because it would not be connected to the awareness. If that were the case, then, even if (as the opponent holds) the body were the cause of the mental consciousness' persistence, the body would only be able to affect the mental consciousness' persistence, not the mental awareness itself (since the mental consciousness's persistence and the mental consciousness would be of different natures and have no connection). The body would therefore not be responsible at all for the mental awareness abiding or remaining for any time.

⁸ Please note that from a Buddhist point of view, the base of a phenomenon is either of one nature with the phenomenon or of a different nature. If it is of the same nature, the phenomenon is in general a part, attribute or instance of the base. If it is of a different nature, the base is a cause of the phenomenon.

⁹ Every phenomenon has numerous *unique* permanent and impermanent characteristics or attributes. The causes of the *unique* impermanent attributes and the causes of their base (the phenomenon that has those attributes) are synonymous. Taking the example of a vase, whatever may be the causes of the color, shape, impermanence, etc. of the vase are necessarily the causes of the vase, while the causes of the vase are necessarily the causes of the vase's color, shape, impermanence and so on.

Please note that although the causes of a *unique* impermanent attribute and the causes of its base are synonymous, the causes of a (common) impermanent attribute and the causes of its base are not synonymous. For instance, impermanence is an attribute of a vase but it is not a *unique* attribute of the vase, for it is also the attribute of a pillar, a table, and so forth. Therefore, the causes of the vase's impermanence and the causes of the vase are synonymous; the causes of impermanence (which is a common attribute of the vase) and the causes of the vase are not synonymous.

This is similar, for instance, to a vase and pillar which are of different natures and not connected: the cause of the vase has an effect on the vase but not on the pillar.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

It follows that the mental awareness does not disintegrate.

Regarding that subject, [the mental awareness], **it follows that it does not disintegrate**, because it abides during the second moment after having been [newly] established.

Furthermore, if the mental consciousness had an *abiding cause*, i.e., a cause that is responsible for its remaining once the mental awareness has newly been established, (i.e., has newly come into existence), it would follow that the mental consciousness is not impermanent. The mental consciousness would be permanent, for it would not disintegrate moment by moment. This is because one moment after having newly come into existence, the mental consciousness would still be around (in dependence on the cause that is responsible for its persistence) and not have disintegrated, that is, not transformed into its next moment.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

Suppose [someone says:] we assert that it [disintegrates in reliance on] a disintegrating cause. [66]

Suppose someone says: [the mental consciousness] is not permanent, for **we assert** that it disintegrates **in reliance on a disintegrating cause**.

Someone may argue that just as the mental consciousness has a cause that is responsible for its coming into existence (a *generating cause*) and another cause that is responsible for its abiding (an *abiding cause*), it needs a further cause that is responsible for the mental consciousness going out of existence (a *disintegrating cause*)¹⁰. Therefore – the opponent contends – the mental consciousness is impermanent since its first moment goes out of existence as a result of its *disintegrating cause*.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

There is also the same absurdity.

[Response:] It follows that it is not feasible that an already established and abiding [mental consciousness] later disintegrates in reliance on a disintegrating cause. This is because if one analyses whether the mental awareness' disintegrating and the mental awareness are of one or different substantial entities, **there is also the same** fault as with the previous **absurdity**.

¹⁰ Our own system asserts only the existence of the first type of cause: a *generating cause* (Tib: *skyed byed kyi rgyu*) that is responsible for an impermanent phenomenon being generated and thus coming into existence; it does not accept the existence of a separate *abiding cause* (Tib: *gnas pa'i rgyu*) or *disintegrating cause* (Tib: *'jig pa'i rgyu*) the main functions of which are to cause a phenomenon to abide or disintegrate.

A cause that generates an impermanent phenomenon is either that phenomenon's substantial cause or cooperative condition. Substantial causes and cooperative conditions create not only impermanent phenomena such as tables, cars, and so forth, they also generate all the characteristics of those phenomena, including the qualities of abiding and disintegrating. It is on account of those attributes that the continuums of impermanent phenomena naturally remain and at the same time disintegrate, that is, change moment by moment. Therefore, it is explained that a phenomenon's *generating causes* not only cause the phenomenon to come into existence, they are also responsible for the phenomenon remaining and disintegrating. Yet, a generating cause is not referred to as an *abiding cause* or a *disintegrating cause*, for it does not mainly cause a phenomenon to abide or disintegrate.

Our own system's response is: just as it is absurd to hold that the mental consciousness remains in reliance on an *abiding cause*, it is absurd to accept that the mental consciousness goes out of existence in reliance on a *disintegrating cause*. Therefore, the analysis that was applied above to refute an *abiding cause* can be applied here to refute a *disintegrating cause*:

In order for the mental consciousness to go out of existence it must have the attribute of disintegrating (i.e., of being impermanent). This attribute and the mental consciousness are either of (a) one nature or (b) different natures.

If they are of (a) one nature, there is no need for a *disintegrating cause* since the mental consciousness naturally goes out of existence owing to the characteristic of disintegrating that is part of it.

If the attribute of disintegrating were of a different nature, it would follow that the *disintegrating cause* only affects the mental consciousness' attribute of disintegrating. It would not affect the mental consciousness itself, since the consciousness and the attribute would be of different natures and thus unrelated. Therefore, even if the *disintegrating cause* existed it would not cause the mental consciousness to go out of existence.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

Also, what could an abiding cause do?

Also, what could an abiding cause do? It follows that it is pointless, because when [the mental awareness] does not meet with a disintegrating cause, it is established and abides; when it meets [with a disintegrating cause] an abiding cause cannot affect its abiding.

Furthermore, if a *disintegrating cause* existed, there would be no need for an *abiding cause*. This is because after a mental consciousness has come into existence, it would remain for as long as it was not affected by a *disintegrating cause*. Once such a *disintegrating cause* came into effect, the mental consciousness would go out of existence without an abiding cause being able to interfere. Hence, an *abiding cause* would play no part in a phenomenon's persistence.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

In case [someone said:] it [affects] the abiding until [the mental awareness] meets With a disintegrating cause.....

In case someone said: if there is no abiding cause, [the mental consciousness] disintegrates prior [to meeting with a disintegrating cause]. So, there is no fault [with our position] as the abiding cause affects **the abiding** [of the mental consciousness] **until** [the mental consciousness] **meets with a disintegrating cause**.

An opponent may counter that an *abiding cause* is necessary, for after having come into existence through its *generating cause*, the mental awareness would not remain for any time unless it had an *abiding cause*. It is only after the *abiding cause* has come into effect and the mental consciousness has been around for some time that the *disintegrating cause* takes over and causes the consciousness to go out of existence.¹¹

¹¹ Although it may seem plausible for a phenomenon to remain for some time in reliance on an *abiding cause* and then to disintegrate in reliance on a *disintegrating cause*, upon analysis it becomes clear that it is impossible. Taking the example of a flower that bloomed three days ago; on day four, fertilizer is added and causes the flower to become bigger, while on day five poison is applied and the flower wilts. This does not mean that the fertilizer is the flower's *abiding cause* and the poison its *disintegrating cause*. The fertilizer is not the *abiding cause* of the flower that existed for the first three days, since it is not its cause. It is not its cause, for the fertilizer was not added before the flower first came into existence. Nor is it the *abiding cause*

[Dharmakirti says in the ***Pramanavarttika***:]

.....There is no contradiction here [67]
That disintegrating is innate to a functioning entity.
And what is the use of an abiding cause?

[Response:] It follows that **there is no contradiction here that** [the attribute of] **disintegrating is innate to a functioning entity**. This is because [a functioning entity] can disintegrate even without meeting a disintegrating cause. If you accept that, **what is the use of an abiding cause?** It is not able to effect the abiding of that which is established, because you accepted [that a functioning entity disintegrates naturally without a disintegrating cause].

According to our own system, whatever is a cause is necessarily a *generating cause*; there is no separate *abiding* or *disintegrating cause*. An impermanent phenomenon exists as a result of having been produced by its *generating causes*, i.e., its substantial causes and cooperative conditions. Those causes not only created the phenomenon itself, they also generated its innate qualities of *remaining* and *disintegrating*. Therefore, as soon as an impermanent phenomenon has come into existence, it naturally abides or continues for some time, while at the same time disintegrating or changing moment by moment.¹²

This is why our own system replies that the attribute of disintegrating is one of the characteristics of an impermanent phenomenon, for an impermanent phenomenon naturally changes moment by moment without the assistance of a *disintegrating cause*. If the opponent agreed to that, he would also have to agree that there was no need for an *abiding cause*.

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. What is the meaning of a base as set forth by the first opponent of this outline?
2. What is the syllogism our own system cites in order to refute that the body is the base of the abiding of the mental consciousness?
3. What are an *abiding cause* and a *disintegrating cause*?
4. Why would the mental awareness be permanent if it were to remain in reliance on an *abiding cause*?
5. Why is there no need for a *disintegrating cause*?
6. Why do the three characteristics of generated, abiding, and disintegrating occur simultaneously?

ELIMINATING [THE IDEA] THAT IT IS CONTRADICTED BY DIRECT PERCEPTION

of the flower on day four, because it is the *generating cause* of that stage of the flower. It is a cooperative condition of the flower on day four, for it caused the flower to continue to thrive. Similarly, the poison is not its *disintegrating cause*, for it is not the cause of the flower that existed for the first three days, while it is the *generating cause* of the wilted flower. It is the cooperative condition of the wilted flower, for it caused it to wilt.

¹² The fact that an impermanent phenomenon both abides and disintegrates may seem contradictory. Geshe Thubten Pelsang refutes this apparent contradiction with the example of a skydiver: a skydive will last about five or six minutes. During the descent, the parachutist is constantly moving – falling ever closer to earth. Yet, although at each moment of his descent he is never flying in the same spot, it is nonetheless correct to say (during each moment) that he is flying. He is flying just after jumping from the plane, when his parachute opens, and shortly before landing. Similarly, although a vase changes moment by moment and is never the same from one moment to the next, each of its moments are nonetheless referred to as ‘vase’. Although the vase is disintegrating or changing moment by moment, it still abides or continues to exist (for some time) as a vase.

In this outline, our own system explains that although there is no simultaneous base of an *already existent* phenomenon, there is a base for a phenomenon that *will come into existence*.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Suppose [someone says:] just as, for instance,
The support of water etc.*

Suppose someone says: **just as** it has been established by direct perception that earth, **for instance**, is the base that affects the abiding of already established **water** etc., so is the body also [the base] of the mind.

An opponent insists that the body is a simultaneous base that is responsible for the mental awareness (that has already come into existence) to remain. He argues that the body can be compared to the earth which serves as such a base of (already existent) water. A water-vessel like a vase, for instance, exists at the same time as the water inside it; the vessel also holds and supports the water and is thus responsible for the water remaining in the vase. This, the opponent argues, is realized – and thus established – by our sense consciousnesses.

Similarly, a person's body is responsible for the person's (already existent) mental awareness remaining with the body as one of the person's aggregates. Since the person's body and mind exist at the same time, the body is a simultaneous base that causes the mental consciousness to remain.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

.....this has the same [flaws] [68]

[Response:] It follows that a vessel does not affect the abiding of already established water, because **this** assertion **has the same** flaws as those cited in the [previous] case.

Our own system replies that a water-vessel that serves as a simultaneous base causing the water inside it to remain can be refuted by the reasoning presented in the previous outline.

Someone says: Well then, why is [a water-vessel] known in the world as the base [of water]?

An opponent objects to our own system's refutation, wondering why a water-vessel is usually described in the world to be such a base.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Since it is a cause generating the functioning entities
That disintegrate each moment [and] the continuum [of which are in the same location
as]
The [earlier] functioning entity, it is a base.*

[Response:] Regarding the subject, a water-vessel, **it is a base** of the water inside it **since it is a cause generating** the later continuum of **the functioning entities**, the [moments of] water inside it, **that** naturally **disintegrate** in **each moment** and are in the same location as the earlier **functioning entity** [water].

In response, our own system says that a water-vessel is indeed a base of the water inside it but not a *simultaneous* base. The water-vessel does not serve as the base of the water that exists at the same time as the water-vessel, but of the water that exists a

moment later. It serves as its causal base and thus its cause, for it causes the water to remain in the vessel.

A water-vessel, like any impermanent phenomenon, constitutes a continuum; a continuum that is comprised of different moments of a water-vessel that are constantly changing. This means that the first moment of the water-vessel transforms into the second moment of the vessel; the second moment transforms into the third, and so on. The same is true for the water inside the vessel, the first moment of the water becomes the second moment of the water, the second moment the third, and so forth.

However, the first moment of the water-vessel and the first moment of the water inside the vessel do not exist at the same time. The first moment of the vessel does not yet have water inside it because in order to pour water into a vessel, the vessel must be there first. If water is poured shortly after the vessel has come into existence, the first moment of the vessel acts as the base of the first moment of the water inside it, the second moment of the vessel as the base of the second moment of the water, and so forth.

Furthermore, the second moment of the water-vessel exists at the same time as the first moment of the water inside the vessel, the third moment of the vessel exists at the same time as the second moment of the water, and so on.

Therefore, Gyalsab Je says that the water-vessel is the base of the water inside it because it is a cause of, and thus generates, the later continuum of the water that – although it seems static – changes moment by moment, and that, as a result of the vessel, remains in the same location as the earlier moments of the water (inside the water-vessel).

[Dharmakīrti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*If it did not [assist], it would not be reasonable, [69]
Since it prevents [the water from] pouring out
It is the base of water, etc.*

If it did not assist [the water] thus, **it would** follow that it is **not reasonable** that [a water-vessel] is a base that is of a different nature [than the water inside it]. Although it is tenable that an impermanent phenomenon has a base, it is not tenable that a permanent phenomenon has one. Regarding the subject, [a water-vessel], **it is the base of the water, etc.** inside it, **since it prevents** the water from **pouring out**.

The vessel assists the water inside it by means of preventing the water from pouring out, i.e., through causing the water to remain inside the vessel. Hence the vessel is a cooperative condition and thus *a generating cause* of the water inside it, which not only gives rise to that water but also to the water's attribute of remaining in the vessel. As a cause of the water it is of a different nature than the water.

However, even though the water-vessel is a cause that is responsible for the water remaining inside it, this does not mean that it is the kind of base set forth by the opponent in the previous outline. The water-vessel is not 'a cause of the abiding of *already existent* water' but a cause of the abiding of water that *will come into existence*. This is because the water does not already exist as a result of the water-vessel, at the [initial] time of the vessel.

Furthermore, only impermanent phenomena have this type of base; a permanent phenomenon does not, for a permanent phenomenon is not generated in reliance on a cause.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Because they do not move, why would qualities,
Generalities and activities need a base? [70]*

Regarding the subject, **qualities, generalities, and activities, why would they need a base** that is of a different nature – it follows they do not, **because** their earlier and later moments **do not move**.

The opponents of this and the previous outline are non-Buddhist philosophers who assert that qualities, generalities, and activities are permanent and not comprised of earlier and later moments that move, i.e., disintegrate or change. Hence, according to those philosophers, Dharmakirti explains, qualities, etc. are not the results of a base.

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. How does the first opponent presented in this outline argue that the earth is the simultaneous base of water?
2. According to our own system, why is a water-vessel a base of the water inside it?
3. Is this life's body a base of this life's mental consciousness?
4. Why does a permanent phenomenon not have a base?

REFUTING OTHER TYPES OF [NON-BUDDHIST TENETS] THROUGH THAT

The reasoning set out above to refute the existence of *a base of the abiding of something that is already established* (as indicated in the *Pramanavarttika* with the words: “[Whether substantially] existent [or substantially] non-existent, since [a simultaneous] base does not [make sense]”) mainly addresses the assertions of the Lokayata. However, this outline indicates that the same reasoning can be applied to refute some of the assertions of the Vaisheshika, another non-Buddhist Indian philosophical system.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*This [reasoning] clears away [the ideas: qualities] are inherent [in a substance]
And [a substance is] a cause [and] that which has inherence;
And that a generality, and so forth, abides,
Because there is no [simultaneous] base. [71]*

Regarding the subject, **this** reasoning which refutes the base of the abiding of something that is already established, it also **clears away** [the assertion] that qualities **are that which is inherent** in a substance and that a substance is (1) **a cause** of the qualities and (2) **that which has inherence**. This is because [the reasoning] has shown that there is no base of the abiding of something that is already established.

As mentioned before, the Vaisheshikas set forth six categories of phenomena: (1) substance, (2) quality, (3) activity, (4) generality, (5) particularity, and (6) inherence. Whatever exists is accepted to pertain to one of those categories.

The earlier reasoning refuting *a base of the abiding of something that is already established* also refutes a Vaisheshika assertion regarding the relationship between a *substance* and its *quality*.

According to the Vaisheshika, although a *substance* (Skt: *dravya*, Tib: *rdzas*) and its *quality* (Skt: *guna*, Tib: *yon tan*) are of different natures, they are connected owing to

inherence. *Inherence* (Skt: *samavaya*, Tib: 'phrod pa 'du pa) does not refer to *inherent existence* (Tib: *rang bzhin gyi yod pa*) as refuted by the Madhyamika Prasangika School but to the relationship between two phenomena that are inseparable.

Since the Vaisheshikas hold that a substance and its qualities are of different natures, they need to explain how these two exist inseparably, i.e., what it is that keeps them together. This is why they set forth *inherence* which connects a substance and its qualities. The qualities are *that which is inherent* in the substance and the substance is *that which possesses that inherence*.

The Vaisheshikas also assert that the *substance* is a cause of the different qualities inhering together in it. Hence, the substance is (1) a cause of its different qualities and (2) it is that which possesses inherence of those qualities, while the qualities are (1) the result of the substance and (2) that which is inherent in the substance.

However, according to our own system, if a substance were the cause of the qualities inhering in the substance, it would be a base or cause of an already established phenomenon, since the substance and its qualities exist at the same time. Thus, the earlier reasoning that refutes a *base of the abiding of an already established phenomenon* can also be applied to refute that a substance is a cause of the qualities inhering in it, and thus that a quality is inherent in a substance.

Gyalsab Je provides two interpretations of the next line of the verse from the *Pramanavarttika* pertaining to this outline ["*And a generality, and so forth abides*"]. The first interpretation is:

It follows that it is not tenable [to accept] that if that (1) which is a cause and (2) has inherence does not exist, then there cannot be that which is inherent, because although there are no particularities [that are the result of a simultaneous cause] **a generality, and so forth abides**.

Someone may hold that if the simultaneous cause of a quality being inherent in a substance does not exist, the inherent, i.e., the quality does not exist either. But our own system disagrees, arguing that, although there are no particularities that are the result of a simultaneous cause, a generality, this does not mean that there is no generality.

This passage addresses another assertion by the Vaisheshikas, who hold that a generality serves as a simultaneous cause of its particularity, and that a generality and its particularity are of different natures¹³.

From the point of view of our own system, there is neither a simultaneous cause of a quality being inherent in a substance nor a particularity that is the result of a simultaneous cause. However, this does not mean that the inherent, i.e., a quality or a generality do not exist.

The second interpretation is:

Alternatively, one can [apply] the previous reason [in order to establish that] "particularities do not exist [as a result of] **a generality that is a base of the abiding of that which is already established**."¹⁴

¹³ An example of a particularity is a *vase*; an example of a generality of the vase is a *functioning thing*. From a Buddhist point of view, the vase is a particularity of a functioning thing because it fulfills the following three characteristics: (1) the vase is a functioning thing, (2) the vase is related to a functioning thing through being of one entity with a functioning thing, and (3) there are many other phenomena that are not a vase but are functioning things.

The Vaisheshika accept only the first and third characteristics, not the second, for they hold that a particularity and its generality are of different natures.

¹⁴ Khedrup Je says, "It negates that a generality is [a base] of the already established in dependence on particularities."

According to the second interpretation, the line from the *Pramanavarttika* [*“And a generality, and so forth abides”*] indicates the following predicate: “particularities do not exist [as a result of] a generality that is a base of the abiding of an already established phenomenon”. This predicate is established by the reason cited above: “because the reasoning has shown that there is no base of the abiding of something that is already established” when applied as follows: *particularities do not exist as a result of a generality that serves as a base of the abiding of an already established phenomenon, because the above-mentioned reasoning has shown that there is no base of the abiding of something that is already established.*

Likewise, one can apply the reason that was cited with regard to a substance and a quality to [the predicate:] “[this reasoning] also clears away [the assertion] that the body is (1) a cause of the mind and (2) that which has inherence.”

Similarly, that reason can also be applied to refute the Vaisheshika assertion regarding the relation of body and mind (when applied as follows): *the above-mentioned reasoning clears away the wrong view that the body is a simultaneous cause of that which is inherent, the mind, because it has shown that there is no base of the abiding of something that is already established.*

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. What is the Vaisheshika assertion with regard to a substance and the qualities inherent in that substance?
2. What is the Vaisheshika assertion as regards a particularity and its generality?
3. What do the Vaisheshika assert with regard to the relationship between body and mind?
4. How does the reasoning refuting a base of the abiding of something that is already established refute the other assertions of the Vaisheshika?

A SUMMARY

In the next three outlines, Dharmakirti summarizes the refutation of a *cause of abidance* as set forth in the outline “Refutation of the reply to that”.

[This is divided into:]

- (1) When analyzing a *cause of disintegration* that arises later, [it becomes clear that] a *cause of abidance* of an already established [phenomenon] is untenable
- (2) If there exists a base for the abiding of that which is already established, it follows that [functioning things] do not disintegrate
- (3) When analyzing, how [a phenomenon] exists naturally, [it becomes clear] that it is untenable

WHEN ANALYZING A CAUSE OF DISINTEGRATION THAT ARISES LATER, [IT BECOMES CLEAR] THAT A CAUSE OF ABIDANCE OF AN ALREADY ESTABLISHED [PHENOMENON] IS UNTENABLE

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*In case a functioning entity disintegrates in reliance on a further [cause],
What is the use of its cause of abidance?
Likewise, if it disintegrates without [a cause of disintegration]*

Causes of abidance do not have the ability [to affect the abiding of that which is already established] [72]

What is the use of a *cause of abidance* of a functioning entity? It follows that it is not needed, because **a functioning entity disintegrates in reliance on a further** cause and has not arisen as having the nature of disintegrating. **If** [a functioning entity] naturally **disintegrates without** needing a further *cause of disintegration*, then it follows that **causes of abidance do not have the ability** to affect the abiding of that which is already established.

Through the analysis of a *cause of disintegration*, it becomes clear that there is no *cause of abidance*:

If – as asserted by the opponent – a *cause of disintegration* were to exist, an impermanent phenomenon would not disintegrate naturally; it would have to rely on a separate cause to go out of existence. A *cause of disintegration* would arise later, after the impermanent phenomenon it causes to disintegrate has come into existence and remained for some time. In that case, a cause of abidance would be pointless, for the impermanent phenomenon would remain naturally as long as its *cause of disintegration* did not come into effect.

If – as accepted by our own system – a *cause of disintegration* does not exist, an impermanent phenomenon necessarily disintegrates naturally; it must be one of the innate characteristics of an impermanent phenomenon that it disintegrates as soon as it has come into existence. In that case, there is no place for a *cause of abidance* because it would not be able to stop the impermanent phenomenon from disintegrating.

IF THERE EXISTS A [PERMANENT] BASE FOR THE ABIDING OF THAT WHICH IS ALREADY ESTABLISHED, IT FOLLOWS THAT [FUNCTIONING THINGS] DO NOT DISINTEGRATE

[Dharmakīrti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*All phenomena that have a base abide [without disintegrating].
Every arisen [phenomenon] has a base.
Thus, all functioning entities will not
At some point disintegrate. [73]*

It follows that **all functioning entities will not at some point disintegrate**, because **every arisen** [phenomenon] ultimately **has** as **a base** a permanent entity such as a self, etc. It follows that there is a pervasion, because all [phenomena] that have a permanent entity as a base are pervaded by abiding without disintegrating.

This verse addresses a fundamental view held by many non-Buddhist Indian philosophers: not only do they accept the existence of a cause of abidance, they also hold that every impermanent phenomenon ultimately must have a base that is permanent. If an impermanent phenomenon did not have such a base, they argue, it would not be stable enough to come into existence, remain for some time, give rise to a result, and so forth. Therefore, those philosophers hold that a person requires a permanent self in order to be reborn in samsara and attain liberation. Followers of the Sāṃkhya system set forth a general principle (Skt: *prakṛti*, Tib: *spyi gtso bo*) that accounts for all physical events, pervades all objects, and is permanent. Followers of the Vaiśeṣika hold that permanent subtle particles serve as the smallest building blocks of the physical world.

From a Buddhist point of view, impermanent, ever-changing causes give rise to impermanent, ever-changing results without requiring a permanent base. If

impermanent phenomena really needed a cause of abidance as well as a permanent base to exist, then they would be permanent, for they would not disintegrate moment by moment.

WHEN ANALYZING HOW A PHENOMENON EXISTS NATURALLY, [IT BECOMES CLEAR] THAT IT IS UNTENABLE

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*If [functioning things] are entities that naturally
Disintegrate, other abiding agents [do not affect their abiding].
If [functioning things] are entities that do not naturally
Disintegrate, other abiding agents [are not needed]. [74]*

If functioning things **are entities that naturally disintegrate**, it follows that **other abiding agents** do not have the ability to affect their abiding. **If that is not** so, it follows that abiding agents are not needed at all.

In conclusion, if – as our own system asserts – one characteristic of an impermanent phenomenon is to change moment by moment, a cause of abidance will not play any part in that process of disintegrating. If changing moment by moment were not one of the characteristics of an impermanent phenomenon, the phenomenon would be static and thus permanent. In that case it would not need a cause of abidance.

REFUTATION [OF THE IDEA THAT THE BODY] IS A SPECIAL COOPERATIVE CONDITION

[This is divided into:]

- (1) The actual refutation
- (2) Refutation of body and mind being of one substantial entity
- (3) Identifying the causes of Samsara

THE ACTUAL REFUTATION

[This is divided into:]

- (1) Refutation of the body being a [special] empowering condition of wisdom, etc.
- (2) Refutation of the body being a [special] empowering condition of attachment, etc.

REFUTATION OF THE BODY BEING A [SPECIAL] EMPOWERING CONDITION OF WISDOM, ETC.

Having previously established that the sense powers are not the special empowering condition¹⁵ (and thus the special base) of the mental consciousness, in this outline, our own system establishes that the body is not the special empowering condition of beneficial states of mind.

¹⁵ As mentioned before, in the context of setting forth past and future lives, an empowering condition refers to a cooperative condition. Therefore, in this context a special cooperative condition and a special empowering condition are synonymous.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*They do not [conform to] the thriving or decline of the body.
Through specific formative actions of awareness
The thriving or decline of
Wisdom and so forth comes about. [75]*

Regarding the subject, wisdom, love, and so forth, the body is not their special base, because their **thriving or decline comes about** through specific formative actions of familiarity with previous awarenesses; **they do not** conform to **the thriving or decline of the body**.

The body is not the special base of positive states of mind such as wisdom, love, compassion, and so on, because positive or negative changes in the body do not necessarily positively or negatively affect those states of mind. For instance, if the body is strengthened through physical exercise, a person's wisdom and compassion do not necessarily increase, whereas when a person is sick and weak, his love and compassion for others facing the same predicament may grow stronger.

Wisdom, love, and so forth increase in dependence on familiarity with similar states of mind, whereas they decrease whenever harmful types of awareness arise in one's continuum. Compassion, for instance, grows stronger from repeatedly meditating on – and thus familiarizing the mental continuum with – affection, and so forth.

It is chiefly through familiarity with beneficial or harmful states of mind (arising earlier) that positive mental factors increase or decline.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*This [indicates that wisdom, etc.] does not [depend on the body as]
The rays of a butter-lamp depend on [their substantial cause].*

There is a pervasion, because **this** reason [indicates] that [wisdom, etc.] **does not depend** on the body [as] **the rays of a butter-lamp**, etc. [depend on] their substantial cause.

The reason our own system cites (“because their strength or decline comes about through specific formative actions in dependence on familiarity with previous awarenesses; they do not conform to the strength or decline of the body”) is pervaded by the predicate (“the body is not their special base”). This means that if wisdom, love, etc. grow or decline through familiarity with beneficial or harmful mental factors and not through strengthening or weakening the body, then the body does not act as the special base of those awarenesses. There is a pervasion because the above-cited reason indicates that wisdom, etc. does not depend on the body in the same way as the rays of a butter-lamp depend on the flame of a butter-lamp.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

In reliance on that [body] this [mind] improves.

As we can see that wisdom improves in reliance on strengthening the body through *Chulen*, etc., wisdom **improves** slightly **in reliance on** the body's improvement.

Positive changes in the body can nonetheless positively affect the development of wisdom, and so forth. As an example, Gyaltsab cites the ingestion of *Chulen*, a type of Tibetan pill that has positive effects on both body and mind. *Chulen* (*bcud len*) is Tibetan for “taking the essence” and connects to the ancient Indian tradition of rejuvenation called *Rasayana*.

Chulen pills can be taken as a replacement for food or as a kind of supplement. They are said to have a special “blessing power” and to replenish the energy in the body, helping to improve health and extend the lifespan. The practice of replacing food with *Chulen* and eating only two or three pills a day is described throughout Tibetan history and many masters lived for years on essence pills such as these. In the contemplative tradition, the *Chulen* pills were used in conjunction with physical yoga and meditation. They are reported to increase energy, mental clarity, a more joyous mood, greater physical strength, less need for sleep, decreased appetite, and a deepening of spiritual practice.

Yet, Gyaltsab Je stresses that (compared to listening, contemplating and meditating on the dharma) *Chulen* pills have only a minor impact on the increase of wisdom and other mental qualities.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

Other than by assisting [the body sense] mind [the body] does not assist [the mental consciousness]. [76]

It follows that the body is not the special base of [wisdom], because the body assists wisdom [only] by way of directly assisting the body consciousness; **other than by assisting that** [body sense] **mind** [the body] **does not assist** [the mental consciousness].

In the case of a practitioner engaging in the contemplative tradition of taking *Chulen*, the body assists, that is, serves as the cause of wisdom and other virtuous types of awareness. Yet it does so only *indirectly*; directly, it affects the body consciousness and possibly the other sense consciousnesses. Without first giving rise to a sense consciousness, it cannot generate a mental awareness. This is another reason why the body does not act as the special empowering condition of wisdom, etc., for if it were, it would have to be the direct cause of that wisdom awareness.

As mentioned before, the sense powers are the special empowering conditions (and thus the indispensable causes) of the sense consciousnesses. The sense powers have a great impact on sense perception.

As a result of the sense powers, in particular the body sense power being affected by the ingestion of *Chulen* pills the body consciousness and the other sense consciousnesses may experience their objects with greater clarity and focus. A mental consciousness, induced by, and the result of a sense awareness, may then observe the object perceived by the sense consciousness and gain a deeper insight into the nature of the object. This in turn results in the development of wisdom and other beneficial states of mind.

In short, the body directly gives rise to the sense consciousnesses, which in turn generate wisdom, etc.

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. Why is the body not the special empowering condition of beneficial states of mind?
2. What is a special empowering condition of wisdom, love, etc.?
3. How does the body serve as a cause of positive types of awareness?

REFUTATION OF THE BODY BEING A [SPECIAL] COOPERATIVE CONDITION OF ATTACHMENT, ETC.

[This is divided into:]

- (1) [Indicating], together with an example, that attachment, etc. is not directly generated by the body
- (2) A summary

[INDICATING], TOGETHER WITH AN EXAMPLE, THAT ATTACHMENT, ETC. ARE NOT DIRECTLY GENERATED BY THE BODY

In this outline, our own system establishes that the body is not the special empowering condition of afflictive emotions such as attachment and anger.

Someone says: Attachment, etc. conforms to the enhancement and decline of the body, for we can see that attachment increases through the strengthening of the body and anger through [the body's] weakening.

An opponent holds that the body is the special empowering condition of attachment since positive or negative changes to the body positively or negatively affect attachment. This is because, (he claims) when the body is strong and healthy attachment will manifest, whereas anger will arise when it is sick and weak.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

At times, attachment, and so forth, increases through strengthening, etc.;
It is generated in reliance on pleasant or unpleasant [feeling].

[Response:] Regarding the subject, **attachment, and so forth** which **increases through the strengthening**, [and decreases through the] weakening, **etc.** of the body **at times** when there is no discriminating wisdom, the body is not its direct empowering condition, because **it is** directly **generated in reliance on pleasant or unpleasant feelings**.

Our own system disagrees, and argues that attachment or anger grow stronger and weaker upon the body growing stronger or weaker only when the mental factor of *discriminating wisdom* is missing.

Discriminating wisdom (Tib: *so sor rtogs pa'i shes rab*) is a mental factor that – among other objects it analyses – analyses different states of mind and is able to distinguish the beneficial from the harmful ones. When such wisdom is present and identifies, for instance, anger (caused, for example, by feeling sick) as painful and pointless, a person may be able to apply the antidote to that affliction and instead generate patience, compassion, etc. Hence, any positive or negative change to the body does not *necessarily* result in attachment or anger.

Also, the body is not the *direct* empowering condition of those afflictive emotions, for attachment or anger that arise in dependence on the strengthening or weakening of the body are not the direct results of the body, but of feelings of pleasure or displeasure which are concomitant with and thus accompany the body consciousness.¹⁶

¹⁶ Please note that feeling is a mental factor that accompanies all sense and mental consciousnesses. In general, every consciousness (sense or mental) has different mental factors. Mental factors refer to the mental functions of an awareness. Although in general, there are many different factors, in his *Compendium of Knowledge (Abhidharma-samucchaya)* the great Indian master Asanga enumerates fifty-one different factors in order to present the most important ones. Those mental functions are further grouped into six categories, one of which is the category called the 'five omnipresent mental factors' because they accompany *every* consciousness. They are contact, discernment, feeling, volition, and attention.

Feeling is a mental factor that experiences the main object of the awareness it accompanies as pleasant, unpleasant, or

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Moreover, [pleasant and unpleasant feelings are generated] in reliance on
Proximity to an internal object [arisen from] equilibrium, and so on. [77]*

Regarding the subject, pleasant and unpleasant feelings, the body is not their [special] empowering condition, because they were generated through **proximity to an internal tangible object** of apprehension that has arisen from the **equilibrium** or imbalance of the constituents, **and so on**.

The body is also not the special empowering condition of the pleasant or unpleasant feelings concomitant with the body consciousness that arise as a result of the body's strengthening or weakening. This is because the body is not the direct cause of those feelings, for their direct cause is their main object: an internal tangible object.

Please note that the main object of a body consciousness is a tangible object¹⁷. When a person apprehends his body with a body consciousness, the body consciousness perceives an *internal* tangible object. It is an *internal* object since it is an object associated with the person's body and not with an object that exists *outside* the person.

When a person's body is strong and healthy, his body consciousness arises as a direct result of a pleasant internal tangible object (perceived by the body consciousness); it does not arise as direct result of the strong and healthy body itself. The internal tangible object, in turn, is a result of the person's physical constituents being in a state of balance.

When a person's body is ill and weak, the person's body consciousness arises as a result of an unpleasant internal tangible object. The cause that generated that tangible object was the imbalance of the physical constituents of that person.

In short, according to this explanation, balanced or imbalanced constituents of a person's body generate pleasant or unpleasant internal tangible objects. The pleasant or unpleasant objects in turn generate a body consciousness that is concomitant with a pleasant or unpleasant feeling. Hence the body is not the special empowering condition of the feeling concomitant with the body consciousness since it is not its direct cause.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*This explains [the way in which] loss of memory
And so forth [arises from] typhoid, etc.
Since it comes about through an awareness
That is generated in reliance on a specific internal object. [78]*

In this way, **this** also **explains** the way in which **loss of memory, and so forth** arises from **typhoid, etc.**, **since** those [symptoms] **come about** only through a sense awareness that is generated in reliance on a specific object of apprehension, an internal

neutral. It is impossible to apprehend an object without the presence of one of the three types of feeling (pleasant, unpleasant or neutral). In fact, feeling is the element that drives us; it is responsible for most of our physical, verbal, and mental actions. This is because in general, pleasant feeling induces attachment, unpleasant feeling induces anger, and neutral feeling induces ignorance.

For a detailed explanation of mental factors, please see Lati Rinpoche and Elizabeth Napper's *Mind in Tibetan Buddhism* [Snow Line Publications 1986] pp. 35-39 and pp. 143-146.

¹⁷ The main objects of an eye consciousness are shape and color; of an ear consciousness, sound; of a nose consciousness, smell; of a tongue consciousness, taste; and of a mental consciousness, all phenomena. In the case of the sense consciousnesses, their main objects are their *observed object conditions*. Therefore, as mentioned before, shape and color are the direct cause of the eye consciousness, sound is the direct cause of the ear consciousness, smell of the nose consciousness, taste of the tongue consciousness, and a tangible object is the direct cause of a body consciousness.

tangible object.

As a result of typhoid fever, of the ingestion of poison or alcohol, etc. a person may experience disorientation, dizziness, and loss of memory. Yet these symptoms were not directly caused by the body being affected by the disease but by the person's body consciousness. The body consciousness perceives an internal tangible object affected by typhoid, etc. and induces a disoriented and bewildered mental consciousness.

As mentioned above, when taking mind-altering substances, suffering from a high fever, and so forth, a person's sense perceptions are altered. Sense objects such as shapes, colors, and sounds appear differently; in particular, tangible objects associated with the body may have changed significantly, causing the person to feel bewildered, confused, and fearful. This sense of disorientation may grow so intense that the person suffers memory loss.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*For example, like the confusion, and so forth
That arises in the continuum
Of some specific [people] from hearing about
Or seeing a tiger or blood. [79]*

Regarding the subject, **for example**, the mental [factor of] **confusion, and so forth that arises in the continuum of some specific** timid people **from hearing** the words, "A **tiger** is coming!" or **seeing** the **blood**, etc. of others who were killed, it is not directly based on the body, because it increases merely through internal feelings.

To further illustrate the above explanation, Dharmakirti cites the example of a fearful person who grows confused and scared upon being warned of an approaching tiger or witnessing a gruesome murder. In that case, it is obvious that the mental factors of confusion and fear (which are mental consciousnesses) are not directly caused by the words of warning or the killing, but by the ear consciousness apprehending the warning and the eye consciousness seeing the blood, etc.

Similarly, any physical event, whether internal or external (i.e., taking place inside the body or in the external environment) first gives rise to different sense perceptions. Those sense perceptions in turn, induce a wide range of mental awarenesses, positive, negative, and neutral ones. Hence there is no physical event that *directly* induces a mental consciousness.

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. Why is the body not the special empowering condition of attachment and other afflictive emotions?
2. What is discriminating wisdom?
3. What is an internal tangible object?
4. Why is feeling concomitant with the body consciousness not the direct result of the body?
5. What are the causes that give rise to attachment and anger which are directed at one's own body?
6. How does one lose consciousness when suffering from typhoid fever?

A SUMMARY

Dharmakirti provides a summary explanation of the fact that the mental consciousness cannot arise unless it is preceded by its substantial cause, a former continuum of mental consciousness.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Because the mind which definitely follows after
Some formative actions
Does not arise without [a substantial cause]
It depends on a [previous] mind. [80]*

Regarding the subject, **the mind, it depends on a previous mind, because it does not arise without** a substantial cause. It does not depend on the body as its substantial cause, since it **definitely follows after formative actions** of familiarity with **some** previous minds.

In summary, the main special empowering condition of a mental consciousness is its substantial cause, the former continuum of a mental consciousness. This is because – like every impermanent phenomenon – a mental awareness is necessarily preceded by a substantial cause: without such a cause it cannot come into existence. The body may serve as a cooperative condition of particular mental awarenesses but it is merely of secondary importance.

The continuum of a mental consciousness has existed uninterruptedly not just throughout the present lifetime but since beginningless time; it will continue to exist throughout future lifetimes and even after the enlightened state of a Buddha is attained.

REFUTATION OF THE BODY AND THE MIND BEING OF ONE SUBSTANTIAL ENTITY

In this outline, our own system refutes the assertion that the body and the mental consciousness are of one nature and inseparably one.

Suppose someone says: Since we see that a child's body follows after the parents' body [we assert that] the child's body arises from [the parents' body]; also, the mind is not of a different substantial entity [than the body]. Hence, through establishing that the mind follows the formation of an earlier mind, it is not established that [the mind] does not depend on the body.

An opponent who is a follower of the Lokayata system argues that, although a later continuum of this life's mental consciousness is the substantial result of an earlier continuum of this life's mental consciousness, this does not mean that the body and the mental consciousness are of different substantial entities and thus of different natures. Since (according to the opponent) a child's body is the substantial result of his parents' body and the mental consciousness is a quality or part of the body, the body and the mental awareness must be of one nature. Therefore, he contends, the mental consciousness necessarily depends on the body for its existence.

Furthermore, from the response by our own system below, it is clear that the opponent holds that entities that are of one nature are necessarily identical. According to him, since the body and the mental consciousness are not of different natures, they must be inseparably one.

[Dharmakirti says in the **Pramanavarttika**:]

*Just as the formative actions of listening, etc.
Depend on [their previous] minds, when they [manifest]
In the mind, they [appear] as qualities in the body,
Because [mind and body] are not of different [substantial entities]. [81]*

[Response:] Regarding the subject, the formative actions of listening, reflecting, creativity, etc., **just as they** have become familiar with and **depend on** their previous **minds**, it follows that **when** examining, etc. **the mind**, they appear as clearly to the body as they clearly manifest [in the mind]. This is because they are qualities that are suitable to be ascertained when directing the mental awareness [to an object] and **because** body and mind **are not of different** substantial entities.

This leads to the following absurdity: If the body and the mental consciousness were of one nature – with the mind being a part or quality of the body and the two being identical – it would follow that any quality of the mental awareness would also have to exist in the body and thus appear to the body consciousness. For instance, when as a result of listening and reflecting on the Buddha dharma, a practitioner generated love and compassion in his mental continuum, love and compassion would also have to be found in his body and appear to the body consciousness. Further, just as sentient beings appear to the love and compassion of the practitioner, they would have to appear to the practitioner's body, if the body and mental consciousness were inseparably one. Similarly, when a craftsperson or artist thought about a piece of art he intended to create, the creativity would have to be found in his body and the piece of art would appear to his body.

IDENTIFYING THE CAUSES OF SAMSAARA

[This is divided into:]

- (1) Identifying the causes of taking birth in the womb
- (2) Dispelling objections to that

IDENTIFYING THE CAUSES OF TAKING BIRTH IN THE WOMB

Our own system sets forth the causes of being born in cyclic existence, based on the example of a human birth.

[Dharmakirti says in the **Pramanavarttika**:]

*Owing to having attachment to the self,
Without being led by another sentient being,
Through wishing to attain happiness and avoid suffering
[Ordinary beings] take birth in lower states. [82]*

Regarding the subject, ordinary beings, they **take birth in lower states** such as a womb, etc. through [the mental factor of] craving, that **wishes to attain happiness and avoid suffering**, because they take birth **owing to having attachment to the self** and **not** on account of **being** powerlessly **led by another sentient being** such as Ishvara, and so forth.

One of the main causes of an ordinary being's rebirth in a lower state such as the human realm is the afflictive emotion of craving; a mental factor that craves to be happy and not to experience problems. In turn, craving is induced by another principal cause of samsaric rebirth: attachment to the "I" and "mine". Hence, in contrast to the

assertions of many major religions, ordinary beings are not born helplessly under the control of 'a creator being' such as God or Ishvara but as a result of their own cravings and other afflicted states of mind.

Yet, it is important to note that merely wishing to be happy and not to suffer is not considered to be an afflictive emotion and thus a cause for samsaric birth. Instead, it is the *craving* to be happy, not to suffer, etc. produced by grasping at and being attached to a non-existent self that is responsible for samsaric birth. As mentioned before, samsaric birth is of four types: (1) birth from a womb, (2) birth from an egg, (3) birth from warmth and moisture, and (4) instantaneous birth.

Although still within samsara birth from a womb as an ordinary human is described as a higher rebirth in comparison to being reborn in a lower state, say as an animal. But compared to the state of liberation it is considered a lower state.

Someone says: it is not tenable that one willingly takes birth in a state of suffering when one wishes for happiness.

An opponent argues that it is contradictory to assert that sentient beings are responsible for being reborn into an existence of suffering when all they wish for is to be happy.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*[The causes] that utterly bind [beings]: the inaccurate awareness
Apprehending suffering to be happiness, and craving.
He who does not have the causes that generate [samsara]
Will not be born [there]. [83]*

[Response:] It follows that it is not contradictory because the causes **that utterly bind** beings: (1) **the inaccurate awareness apprehending suffering** to be happiness and (2) **craving** desiring to attain happiness are the causes that generate Samsara. It follows that it is the case, because **he who does not have** erroneous craving, an Arhat, **will not be born** in Samsara, by virtue of having eliminated [erroneous craving] in its entirety.

Although sentient beings wish to be happy and not to suffer they inevitably and uncontrollably experience countless problems and difficulties owing to their frequent misperceptions of reality, which generate craving, attachment, aversion and so on. It is those misperceptions that are identified as the root of all our suffering, and they include the wrong awareness perceiving a self-sufficient, substantially existent self, the wrong consciousness perceiving that which is impermanent to be permanent, or that which is in the nature of suffering to be in the nature of lasting happiness. Those misperceptions give rise to afflictive emotions such as craving, aversion, jealousy, and so on and thus to the accumulation of countless contaminated karmic actions which eventually ripen into having to take another rebirth and once again experiencing the pain of birth, sickness, aging, and death.

It becomes evident that those states of mind serve as the causes of samsara when we consider the example of an Arhat who has removed all misperceptions and afflictions and is thus no longer reborn in cyclic existence, i.e., born into the five contaminated aggregates.

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. What are the main causes of birth in samsara?
2. Why do sentient beings suffer when all they want is to be happy?
3. Why is the wish to be happy and not to suffer not an afflictive emotion?

4. What is the main difference between an ordinary person and an Arhat?

DISPELLING OBJECTIONS TO THAT

In response to the objection to past and future lives, our own system establishes that for something to exist it does not necessarily have to be a tangible element of the human body nor an object of the human senses.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

Suppose [someone says:] Going to or coming from [other lives] are not seen.

Suppose someone says: There is no **going to or coming from** other lives, because they **are not seen**.

Here, a follower of the Lokayata School makes the classic argument for the non-existence of past and future lives: we cannot see, hear, smell, taste or perceive them with our sense consciousnesses. In general, we do not have memories of past lives, cannot foresee future lives, and do not witness others being reincarnated.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Because they have obscured sense powers they do not see.
For example, it is like an obscured eye
That does not see a small amount of smoke. [84]*

[Response:] It follows that the fact that the Lokayatas **do not see** something does not establish its non-existence, **because** the Lokayatas **have obscured sense powers**. **For example, it is like an obscured eye that does not see a small amount of smoke**, although it is there.

Our own system counters that if something is not perceived by humans – in particular with the sense consciousnesses – that is not a valid argument for its non-existence. Lokayatas who are ordinary beings have sense faculties that are the results of afflictive emotions and contaminated karma; they are thus limited in what they can apprehend. Dharmakirti cites the analogy of an eye sense power whose vision is impaired by floaters, cataracts, or even blindness, for instance, and is thus unable to make out a trace of smoke floating in the sky. Just as the smoke is difficult to detect when suffering from an eye disease, it is comparably hard to perceive past and future lives, especially when our perception is limited by wrong views and other afflictions.

Someone says: Even though the eye does not see [the smoke] it can touch the body. Yet, [other lives] are not observed and thus do not exist.

An opponent objects to the example. He argues that smoke interacts with the body for it is obstructed by the body. Also, smoke can be perceived by another sense: it can be smelled by the nose consciousness. However, past and future lives do not physically interact with our body nor are they perceived by our senses. Hence, the opponent argues, they must be non-existent.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Although they are embodied beings, since [their bodies] are subtle
They are intangible to some beings;
Just like water [absorbs into clay and] mercury [into] gold.
Something is not non-existent because it is not seen. [85]*

[Response:] Regarding the subject, embodied beings in the intermediate state, **although they are embodied, to some [beings] they are intangible** since they have bodies that **are subtle** and luminous – **just like water** that enters clay and **mercury** that enters **gold** without resistance. It follows therefore that something is not non-existent because it is not seen by the Lokayatas; although something exists it is possible that the Lokayatas do not see it.

Our own system replies that there are sense objects that are not obstructed by most human bodies nor perceived by an ordinary human being's sense consciousnesses. Yet this does not mean that these objects do not exist. An example is the body of a *bardoba* or *intermediate state being*.

The *bardo* or *intermediate state* refers to a transitional state between samsaric death and rebirth in the Desire or Form Realms (as mentioned before, there is no *bardo* between death and rebirth in the Formless Realm).

According to Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakosha*, an intermediate state being is also referred to as 'mind-arisen', 'seeker-of-existence', and 'smell-eater', because it has a subtle mental body, rushes about seeking a new existence or rebirth, and feeds on odours.

An intermediate state being is born instantaneously and its sense faculties, limbs and other parts of the body are completed simultaneously. Through the force of its karma it can go in an instant wherever it wants. It has the shape of the body of the next life, whether hell-being, preta, animal, human, semi-celestial or celestial being. Although its body is considered to be physical form, it is a very subtle body not made of gross flesh, blood and so forth but from subtle energy winds. Except for its future birthplace, it is not obstructed by any physical objects such as human or animal bodies, fences or mountains. Therefore, it cannot be perceived with ordinary human sense awareness. For most humans (except for a future birth-mother) it is not tangible. Dharmakirti gives the analogy of clay and water and of mercury and gold. Just as water or mercury absorb into clay or gold respectively, a bardo being's body can move unhindered through a human body.

Gyalsab Je concludes, that although there are many phenomena the Lokayatas and other humans are unable to perceive, this does not mean they do not exist.

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. What example does Dharmakirti give of a physical form that is not an object of ordinary sense consciousnesses?
2. What are other examples of physical phenomena that are too subtle to be perceived by human sense consciousnesses?
3. What are the characteristics of the body of an intermediate state being?

REFUTATION THROUGH AN ANALYSIS OF THE ASPECTS OF THE NATURE OF THE BODY THAT ACTS AS THE BASE [OF THE MENTAL AWARENESS]

In the following outlines, Dharmakirti continues to refute the assertion by the Lokayatas that the body is the special base of the mental consciousness by way of examining the body. Dharmakirti argues that there are two possibilities: either (a) the coarse, that is, the whole body serves as a special base or (2) it is a subtle particle that is part of the body that does. Therefore, there are the following two outlines:

[This is divided into:]

- (1) Refutation [of the idea] that a partless coarse body is the special base of the conceptual awareness
- (2) Refutation [of the idea] that the subtle particles [of the body] are the special base of the conceptual awareness

REFUTATION [OF THE IDEA] THAT A PARTLESS COARSE BODY IS THE SPECIAL BASE OF THE CONCEPTUAL AWARENESS

In this outline, our own system refutes not only the idea that the whole body serves as the special base of the mental consciousness, but that a *partless* body serves as such a base. With this, Dharmakirti addresses one of the major assertions of the Vaisheshikas.

Although the main opponents of this section of the text are the Lokayatas Khedrup Je describes the connection between the assertion of the Lokayatas and that of the Vaisheshikas – with regard to a partless body – in his *Great Commentary on the Pramanavarttika, Ocean of Reasoning*:

Khedrup Je explains that in general, the Lokayatas do not assert a partless body. Yet if they were to hold that the body which serves as the special base of the mental consciousness is permanent (since the Lokayatas accept causeless production) it would follow that the body is partless, i.e., it would not be made of body parts, it would only possess them. If the Lokayatas accepted that, their assertion regarding such a body would be similar to that of the Vaisheshikas.

The Vaisheshikas hold that a coarse phenomenon such as the human body is necessarily partless. The head, arms, and other limbs are not considered to be parts of the human body but autonomously existent partless phenomena: the body pervades the head, arms, and so forth as a separate permanent part-possessor and as a type of separate generality (Tib: *spyi don gzhan*). Thus, the body possesses those body parts without being made of them. If the body did not exist as such a separate body-possessor there would be no body but only parts. This is explained below.

The human body also pervades all *other* human bodies as a separate generality and part-possessor that enables us to recognize someone's body as human. Therefore, according to the Vaisheshika, part-possessors are literally more than the sum of their component parts and they are not reducible to the mere collection of the parts.

If these philosophers did not propound a *partless* part-possessor (and could accept that, for instance, the upper part of the body is not where the lower part of the body is) they would be unable to postulate a separate part-possessor that exists as an autonomous entity, pervades the collection of its component parts, and is more than those parts.

Our own system refutes the existence of such a partless body acting as the special base of the mental consciousness by way of establishing the non-existence of a partless part-possessor¹⁸.

In the context of the discussion between Dharmakirti and the Lokayatas – in particular, in the context of our own system refuting the view that the whole body is the special base of the mental consciousness – Dharmakirti bases his arguments on the assumption that the Lokayatas assert a partless body. This provides Dharmakirti with the opportunity to exhaust different possibilities with regard to the type of body that could serve as a special base of the mental consciousness. In response to such an

¹⁸ Even though the different Buddhist tenet systems hold that the body is the part-possessor (Tib: *yan lag can*) of its head, limbs, etc. they do not accept that the body is partless (Tib: *cha med*) and exists as a separate generality that pervades all other human bodies. Instead they assert that the body and its parts are of one nature.

assumption Dharmakirti argues in the following outlines that a partless part-possessor does not exist:

[This is divided into:]

- (1) Refutation [of the idea] that a part-possessor is partless
- (2) Dispelling [alleged] contradictions regarding the refutation

REFUTATION [OF THE IDEA] THAT A PART-POSSESSOR IS PARTLESS

[This is divided into:]

- (1) Establishing the reason
- (2) Citing [the reason]

ESTABLISHING THE REASON

Our own system refutes the idea that a partless body serves as the special base of the mental consciousness by way of citing a syllogism establishing that a partless part-possessor does not exist. But before citing such a syllogism, Dharmakirti establishes the validity of the syllogism's reason. He establishes the reason by raising three contradictions that would ensue if a partless part-possessor did exist.

These three contradictions are based on the logical absurdity that if a part-possessor were partless, it could not combine many contradictory aspects such as moving, unmoving, and so forth. This is because a partless part-possessor such as a body and the body parts would be one, for a partless body could not be considered in isolation of the body parts. If a partless body and the body parts were not one or identical, the body would be made of parts that are other than itself and thus not be partless. Therefore, a partless body and the body parts would be a *partless one* (Tib: *cha med gcig*) or a partless unit and what is true for one would be true for the other.

This is the line of reasoning based on which our own system cites a syllogism establishing that such a partless body does not exist, and before that establishes the validity of the syllogism's reason through raising the following contradictions:

[This is divided into:]

- (1) It is contradictory based on actions
- (2) It is contradictory based on what is seen
- (3) It is contradictory based on qualities

IT IS CONTRADICTORY BASED ON ACTIONS

In this outline, our own system establishes that if the body and its component parts were a *partless one*, it would be in contradiction with actions.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*It is contradictory because if the hand, etc.
Moves, the entire [body] moves.*

If the hand, etc. of a person's body – which as part-possessor is established to exist together with and to be connected to [the parts] – **moves**, it follows that **the entire** body as a part-possessor would **move**, because the two [hand and body] are a *partless one*.

Asserting that the body is partless and is one with the head, limbs, etc. contradicts the fact that the body parts perform certain actions. It would follow that when the hand moves, the entire body, i.e., every single part, head, fingers, toes, etc. would have to move, because the hand and the body would be a *partless one*.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

Since [two contradictory] actions are not possible for [a partless] one [The body] is established otherwise as [having] different [parts]. [86]

It follows that there is a pervasion, **since** it is not possible for that which is a *partless one* to be a common locus of two contradictory **actions** of moving and not moving. If the reason is not established, it follows that the body **is established otherwise, as** having **different** parts. This is because moving and not moving are contradictory.

The reason ("because the two [hand and body] are a *partless one*) indicated in the previous two lines from the *Pramanavarttika* ("It is contradictory because if a hand, etc./Moves, the entire [body] moves.") is pervaded by the predicate ("the entire body as a part-possessor will move"). In other words, it is logically correct to assert that if the two, hand and body, were a partless unit, the body in its entirety would necessarily move. This is because a partless body cannot be both moving and not moving.

If someone said that the latter reason is not established, i.e., that a partless body can be both moving and not-moving, it would follow that a partless body does have parts. This is because there can be no phenomenon that is both moving and not moving at the same time, since the two actions are contradictory. The only remaining option would be that a part of the body is moving and another part is not moving, but this would entail that the body is not partless.

IT IS CONTRADICTORY BASED ON WHAT IS SEEN

Here, our own system argues that if the body and the body parts were a *partless one*, it would contradict what we can and cannot see.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*If one [part] is covered, the entire [body]
Will be covered or.....*

If one [part], a person's face **is covered** by a cloth, it follows that **the entire** body **will** appear as **covered** by the cloth, because the part-possessor of the two [the body and the face] are a *partless one*.

If the body and the body parts were a partless unit, it would follow that when the face was covered by a cloth, the other body parts would necessarily be covered, since the face and the body are identical and have no parts.

However, this would contradict the fact that when only the face is covered (and no longer visible), we can still see the rest of the body that is not covered.

Also, if the body and the body parts were a *partless one* and only the face were covered by a cloth, it would follow that the body is both covered and not covered. But since these two are contradictory the only other option would be that the body has a component that is covered and one that is not covered. The body would have a part that is covered because of the covered face and it would have a part that is not covered since the other body parts are still visible. However, those two components are not tenable because the opponent holds that the body is partless.

Someone says: The word “or” [in the root-verse] means to cover a part with a cloth, but since the part-possessor is not covered there are no two components, one that is covered and one that is not.

An opponent believes that the word “or” (from the line “*Will be covered or...*” in the *Pramanavarttika*) indicates that although *the face that is a part* is covered by the cloth the *body that is a part-possessor* is not covered. Therefore, he argues, the fault that the body has a component that is covered and a component that is not would not occur.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

.....*if it is not covered*
It is possible that is seen [as uncovered]

[Response:] Well, then, it follows that at that time the part-possessor of the face [the body] will be seen as **not covered**, because **it is possible that it is seen** as uncovered.

Our own system counters: if the part-possessor of the face, the body, were not covered (despite the face being covered), it would follow that the body could be *seen* to not be covered. If that were the case, there would be two kinds of face, (a) a face that is covered and (b) a face that is not covered. The former would be covered by a cloth and thus not connected to the part-possessor, the body which (according to the opponent) is not covered. The latter face would not be covered because it would be pervaded by and thus be one with the body that is not covered.

IT IS CONTRADICTORY BASED ON QUALITIES

In this outline, our own system shows that if the body and the body parts were a *partless one*, it would contradict some qualities or attributes of the body such as its color.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

..... *if one part is painted*
[the entire body] is painted or.....

If only the face is painted blue, it follows that the body in its entirety appears as painted blue, because the part-possessor of the two [the body and the face] are a *partless one*.

As in the previous two outlines, our own system argues that if the body were a partless one, it would follow that when a part such as the face were painted blue, the part-possessor body would also appear to be blue. In other words, the color of the entire body would have to be the same as that of the face.

Someone says: The word “or” [in the root-verse] means that a part is painted, but the part-possessor is not.

As before, an opponent argues that the word “or” (from the line “[*the entire body*] is painted or.....” in the *Pramanavarttika*) indicates that only the face is painted blue, while the part-possessor of the face, the body is not.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

..... *we will cognize a painted and unpainted [face].*

[Response:] Well, then, it follows that at one time **we will** individually **cognize** two faces, one that has been **painted** blue **and** one that is **unpainted**. This is because we directly

see the blue face that has been painted; and it will also be possible that at that time we see with its human hue the face of the part-possessor which is the unpainted basis of existing together with and connecting [the body parts].

In response, our own system presents a similar counterargument as before: if the face were painted blue but the body were not, it would follow that there are two faces: (a) a face that is blue and (b) a face that is not blue. The former would be painted blue and thus not connected to the body which (according to the opponent) is unpainted. The latter face would not be blue but maintain its original human hue. This is because it would be one with the part-possessor, the body which is the basis that connects the different body parts.

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. What are the three contradictions our own system sets forth in the last three outlines?
2. Why does our own system present these contradictions?
3. If the body were partless why would it follow that when the hand moves, the head, legs, etc. also have to move?

CITING [THE REASON]

Having previously established the validity of the syllogism's reason by way of the three contradictions, our own system then cites the syllogism establishing that there is no body that is a *partless one*. This syllogism refutes the assertion of a partless part-possessor as held by the Vaisheshikas and by those Lokayatas who would have to accept that the body is partless, if they asserted that it is permanent.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

Thus, the collection does not exist as [a coarse, partless] one. [87]

Regarding the subject, **the collection** that is the body, **it** does **not** exist as a coarse partless **one**, because it combines many contradictory [aspects] such as moving, unmoving, and so forth.

The subject of the syllogism (*the collection that is the body*) indicates that the body is made up of different parts other than itself and is thus a collection of those phenomena. The combination of the two, the subject and the syllogism's predicate (*it does not exist as a partless one*), constitutes the syllogism's thesis (*the collection that is the body does not exist as a coarse partless one*). The thesis is established by the reason (*because it combines many contradictory aspects such as moving, unmoving, and so forth*). In other words, in dependence on the reason: it combines many contradictory aspects such as moving, unmoving, and so forth – a fact that was established in the previous three outlines – a respondent is able to realize that the body does not exist as a partless unit.

Please note that the syllogism's reason is established (i.e., *a collection that is the body combines many contradictory aspects such as moving, unmoving, and so forth*) because the body is made of different parts that can engage in contradictory actions with, for instance, the hands moving around while the legs remain still. Yet this would be impossible in the case of a partless body because (a) there is no single entity that can move at the same time move and remain still and (b) a partless body would not be made of different parts that perform these actions.

If [according to] the Vaisheshikas, coarse external objects have parts, then when one differentiates and investigates the parts [it becomes clear] that [coarse external objects]

are nothing more than a mere composite of subtle particles. Therefore, since it is impossible that [those particles] are functioning entities that are obstructive, resistant, and so forth, [the Vaisheshika] assert that there is a part-possessor that is of a different nature than the parts.

Although according to our own system, the above-cited syllogism is logically correct, the Vaisheshikas would disagree. The Vaisheshikas hold that if a coarse external phenomenon such as the body were to have parts, the body and its parts (e.g., the body's subtle particles) would necessarily be of one nature. Yet in that case, the Vaisheshikas argue, when one analyzed the particles the body is made of, one would come to the conclusion that there was no body that served as a part-possessor and connected those particles; there would be no external part-possessor that could be perceived, touched, that blocks other bodies, and so forth. This is because one would not be able to find anything but the subtle particles of which the body is made. Since the Vaisheshikas believe that this contradicts our experience, common sense, etc. they hold that the body is a permanent 'part-possessor' and of a different nature than the body parts.

Those who accept that whatever is a coarse phenomenon does necessarily not exist substantially, and that a collection and a collection-possessor are of different substantial entities only [hold] wrong conceptions without knowing how to posit a collection and a continuum.

Our own system counters that those who hold that a part-possessor is permanent (i.e., does not exist substantially) and that a part-possessor and its parts are of different natures do not have an accurate view of reality. They are unable to posit a collection that is made up of different parts or a continuum that is made of subsequent moments in time.

Please note that Gyalsab Je refers to the part-possessor as "collection" and the parts as "collection-possessor". A part-possessor is a collection because it is comprised of a multitude of different parts that are other than itself. The parts are collection-possessors since they comprise the collection.

This "part-possessor" is fundamentally accepted by the Vaisheshikas. However, as the Lokayatas accept that the body is the special base of the mental awareness, [the discussion of the Vaisheshika view] is an appendage that investigates and refutes the nature of the body that acts as a base; the Lokayatas are the opponents of those verses.

As mentioned above, the view of a partless part-possessor described here is one of the fundamental assertions of the Vaisheshikas. Its refutation is only ancillary and part of the refutation of the assertion that the body is the special base of the mental consciousness. It is mainly directed at the Lokayatas who do not accept the existence of past and future lives and are the principal opponents here.

DISPELLING OF THE [ALLEGED] CONTRADICTION REGARDING THE REFUTATION

[This is divided into:]

- (1) Disposing of the [alleged] absurdity that an external object cannot be cognized by a sense consciousness
- (2) Refuting other types [of non-Buddhist tenets] through that
- (3) Refuting [the existence of] a part-possessor and, in particular, the qualities that are dependent on it.

DISPELLING THE [ALLEGED] ABSURDITY THAT AN EXTERNAL OBJECT CANNOT BE COGNIZED BY A SENSE CONSCIOUSNESS

In this outline, our own system rebuts an objection by an opponent who is a follower of the Vaisheshika School. The opponent argues that if a part-possessor and the subtle particles it possesses were of one nature, there would be no sense objects, such as shapes, colors, sounds, and so forth, that ordinary beings could apprehend with their sense consciousnesses.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Someone says: It is many [subtle particles] just as before;
Because there is no difference and they are the smallest
They are not cognized [by a sense consciousness]*

Someone says: If a coarse external object is not of a different substantial entity from its subtle particles, then **it is** nothing more than an occurrence of **many** subtle particles. In that case, it also follows that **just as before**, at the time when the many separate particles [had not yet assembled], the external object [composed of those particles] is [now] not cognized by a sense consciousness. This is because (a) there is no difference between the earlier [and the present particles] and (b) [a coarse external object] is subtle particles.

A follower of the Vaisheshika system argues that if a vase, for instance, did not exist as a separate entity of a different nature than its component particles, there would only be particles and no vase that could be perceived by an ordinary eye consciousness.

Both Buddhists and Vaisheshikas agree that there is a difference between the particles before and after they have assembled to form a vase that can be used to hold water, etc.

However, according to the Vaisheshikas, if the vase were of one nature with the particles, there would be no actual vase and thus no actual difference between what was there before, and after the particles had come together, since in both cases there would be only a multitude of subtle particles assembled differently. Therefore, they argue, an ordinary eye consciousness would not perceive a vase either before or after (the particles had assembled) because a vase would be nothing more than subtle particles, and subtle particles are not visible to an ordinary sense awareness.

Our own system gives a reply to each of the two reasons presented above by the opponent. ("This is because (a) there is no difference between the earlier [and the present particles] and (b) [a coarse external object] is subtle particles"):

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*.....It is not established
That there is no difference, because the form that is distinct [from the earlier form]
[Would] be the object of the sense [consciousness].....*

[Response:] The (a) first reason is not established: it is not established **that there is no difference** between a form that acts as the observed object condition of a sense consciousness and a form that does not act as such an observed object condition. This is because **the form that is distinct from** the earlier form would have to **be the object of** apprehension of the **sense** consciousness.

In response to the first reason ("because (a) there is no difference between the earlier [and the present particles]"), i.e., to the opponent claiming that if the vase and its particles were of one nature there would be no difference between the particles before and after they had formed the vase, our own system contends:

Although on a subtle level the subtle particles merely group together in different ways, on a coarser level this may account for significant differences between the various phenomena with regard to their color, shape, function, and other characteristics. Similarly, the way the particles have come together determines whether an object does or does not serve as the *observed object condition*¹⁹ of a particular sense consciousness. Thus, it is in dependence on how its subtle particles have assembled that an object may or may not appear to an eye consciousness as a vase.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

.....*It is not subtle particles.*

The (b) second reason it not established: Regarding the subject, a vase, it follows that **it is not subtle particles**, because it is an object that is able to induce an ascertaining consciousness through the power of a direct sense *pramana*.

In response to the second reason (“[a coarse external object] is subtle particles”), i.e., to the opponent professing that if the vase and its particles were of one nature, the vase would merely be subtle particles, our own system counters:

This is not correct because not only does the vase give rise to an eye consciousness that is a valid cognizer directly perceiving the vase, it also generates a conceptual consciousness which ascertains that the object is a vase. Therefore, the vase is more than mere particles, as it is clearly perceived as a vase with a particular shape, color, etc. by a sense consciousness and is thereafter identified as such by a mental awarenesses.

Acharya Devendrabuddhi says in his commentary on this [topic in the *Pramanavarttika*], “At that time, subtle particles are not the object of convention”. The meaning [of what Devendrabuddhi] says is: [at that time] sense consciousnesses do not realize conventions through their own power, for sense consciousnesses induce coarse conventions such as “This is form”, and so forth.

Our own system’s explanation is affirmed by a quote from the Indian Buddhist master Devendrabuddhi. Devendrabuddhi says in his commentary on the *Pramanavarttika*, at the time when the subtle particles have assembled to form a coarse, external phenomenon, the different sense consciousnesses perceive shape, color, sound and so forth. Yet they are not able to think “This is a visual form”, “This is a song”, and so forth. Thus, the sense awarenesses merely perceive the raw data and give rise to conventions, that is, to conceptual consciousnesses with regard to those coarse objects (without giving rise to conventions with regard to the *subtle particles* of which the coarse object is comprised).

The sense awarenesses give rise to conventions in the sense that they induce conceptual consciousnesses that designate, for instance, “vase” upon cognizing a round-bellied, flat-based phenomenon able to perform the function of holding water. The conceptual consciousness imputes “vase” because it thinks “This is a vase”, based on the previously perceived shape, color and assembled parts of the vase.

Likewise, through thinking “This is a table”, a conceptual consciousness affixes the label “table”. The convention arises as a result of having previously cognized the color, shape and the assembled parts of a table.

¹⁹ An *observed object condition* (Tib: *dmigs rkyen*) of an awareness refers to an object that is both (1) the appearing object of that awareness and (2) the direct cause that gives rise to the awareness.

In the case of an eye consciousness perceiving a vase, the vase is the observed object condition of that sense consciousness since it is one of the causes that directly generates the awareness and it is what appears to the eye consciousness.

